

LOCATION OF UNION STATION.

THREE PLANS BEING CONSIDERED.

Interesting Plan for Tunnel Under River and Station on Street Level Said to Be Receiving Consideration.

There is a constantly growing interest in the city regarding the future development of the city river front, its effect on the city, and especially its effect on the railroad situation and the location of the union station. So far no one knows what will happen, in spite of many theories, but there are a few things which seem to have been settled, at least in a general way, and one of these is the location of the union station. It is the prevailing opinion among those who ought to know that the change in the location of the station will be little, perhaps none, at least in so far as the tracks are concerned, and this assumption has led to three possibilities—to place the new station on the site of the present one, with the waiting-rooms on the street level and the tracks above; to move the station east to a site on Summer street, or to erect a new station on the site of the present one, and carry the tracks below in a subway, which would continue across the river through a tube. It is said that the engineers are seriously considering each one of these three propositions.

Of the three possible alternatives the last is the newest and has been little thought of by the people of the city in

general. It would mean engineering difficulties of no small proportions, a large money outlay and a long time for completion; but these all make it interesting. There is no doubt that such a scheme would be an aid to Springfield above ground, for one of the unfortunate parts of the present plan, the arch, would be removed and the apparent check on development north of the railroad tracks would be a thing of the past. Again, the scheme has attractive possibilities in that it is possible that by the time such a plan could be worked out the roads of New England may all be electrically operated, and the tunnel plan, with a subway station, would be clean enough for the most fastidious. Above ground the advantages of such a scheme can hardly be realized—the taking from Main street of the arch and the railroad tracks from the heart of the city. Under such a plan the new station would probably be built in the very heart of the city, perhaps on Main street, and the waiting-rooms, etc., could all be on the ground level, so situated that a few steps down would land one on the station platform, the trains running through the tunnel. Such a tunnel would necessarily have to be deep, to enable it to run under the riverbed. With electricity the plan would be ideal, except for grades; but with steam it would be most unattractive, and almost impossible. The question of grades would be the greatest one, for the grade into the present station from either direction is now considerable; to both the east and west the tracks rise considerably from the station, and this would be even more the case if an under-river tunnel should be built. Purely from an esthetic point of view, and from a practical point of view to a certain point, the plan for a tunnel under the river has many attractive sides which the other plans lack, and the report that it is being seriously considered by the engineers of the railroads and the city makes it well worthy of notice.